



LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES

May 12, 2010

BOARD PRESENT: Bailey, Brodsky, Bryant, Chiles, Grey-McKenzie, Howard, Kim, Lewis, J., Lewis, O., Neuman, Riccardi, Sheriff-Merchant

STAFF PRESENT: Parker Hamilton, Director; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary

The Library Board meeting was convened by Chair Brodsky at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Minutes from the April 14, 2010 meeting were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The ceremony to rename the Rockville Library is May 28 at 11:00 a.m. on the Town Square.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Due to **budgetary constraints** and the **CAO's initiative** to reduce paper/print/postage the news articles regarding libraries will no longer be printed and copied for the Board packets (an email will be sent each month containing links to these articles); the mailing of materials to Board members who miss a meeting will no longer be a practice (members may request that the materials be sent electronically); approved minutes from previous Library Board meetings will no longer be copied for Board packets (these minutes are posted on the [Library Board's website](#)); and dinner will no longer be provided for Board meetings.

The Board needs to make a decision about the \$37K in their **subsidiary account**. This money can no longer be used to provide food, fund the annual meeting or on any discretionary items. Anything purchased with this money must be deemed essential by the County.

A discussion was held as to how the approximately \$37K should be spent. It was suggested that the money be used: to purchase something lasting; for a scholarship fund; for conference registrations; or to purchase materials. The money can be used to purchase materials, and there is a need for board books. The Library does receive many donated children's books, but the books must be ones that are already in the system or it creates a workload for an already diminished collection staff. A commitment was made to the Disability Resource Center that books in Braille would be purchased. A request has been written asking the Friends of the Library to purchase the Braille books.

A motion was made that the funds be used for materials with emphasis on early literacy, tactile and Braille books. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The books will be labeled as donations from the Library Board.

The **Noyes Children's Library** Foundation presented a proposal to the County Executive which he accepted and forwarded to the Council. The Council has tentatively accepted the proposal. If approved, the Noyes Library will remain open. Partial funding for staff will come from the Foundation. Council will approve the funding through February 2010 to give the Foundation the opportunity to raise the money. About \$75K per year is needed to keep it open. The Foundation currently has about \$14K, and they feel they can raise another \$50K very quickly in order to keep the library open. The proposal is to reinstitute the public/private partnership from the 1990s when the library was recommended for a complete closure. The Foundation, at that time, raised about \$300K. The Foundation would work with Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, Inc. and the Town of Kensington to raise the funds. The Foundation has asked that the County keep the library open with their support until it is actually ready for renovation. They will raise the money for staffing as well as helping the FOL raise the money for the renovation. This will take the burden off the County if they can do it; if they cannot, the library closes. If the library closes, it will be for up to two years. The Foundation has a really good track record, and it is felt that they will be able to raise the needed funds.

MCPL was asked to find additional savings in the **FY10 and FY11 budgets** that would have equaled approximately \$1M. The request was responded to and a number of the items that were suggested were retracted, such as closing Olney Library early. The request for additional savings for FY10 was completely withdrawn leaving \$593K to be found for the FY11 savings plan. With the \$593K savings, the FY11 budget is now \$28.5M which is a 24% reduction from the FY10 approved budget. In order to meet that new savings, a recommendation was made to take the materials budget all the way down to \$3M; the substitute budget was further reduced; as were supplies and equipment; and two additional positions were abolished. The Council accepted those recommendations, and at full Council yesterday, again with regret, Mr. Leggett's recommendations were accepted.

It is unclear whether or not they will adopt the budget on May 27 because there are a number of outstanding issues such as furloughs, the ambulance fee, and the threat of suit from the school system. The charter gives the Council until June 1 to adopt the budget. All the Council worksessions have been cancelled for the remainder of this week.

There have been really great discussions with the LACs and the Friends of the Library chapters, and as a result, there have been many wonderful supportive letters sent from them to the Council. A powerful letter was sent from Chair Brodsky; Paulette Dickerson also submitted a very strong letter; and David Chiles has been at the hearings taking notes and ensuring that the Board has been represented.

The Agency Managers met with Mr. Leventhal after the idea was put forth by the Union that branch managers should manage two branches. This idea has caused a lot of tension in the Library Department because it is management against represented employees. Council is charged with appropriating funding; the Executive branch then manages these funds.

Council did present a final recommendation after receiving feedback from Chair Brodsky, Ann Dorough (President, FOLMC) and the rest of the community. Council found that there was no support for this idea. So the final proposal that was sent by the Union dealt with the pairing of the smaller branches run by Senior Librarians rather than Agency Managers. Director Hamilton communicated to the HHS Committee that this might become a classification issue. Classification states that a branch is run by a

Manager III, not a Senior Librarian. If these are mixed, there will be employees working out of class and they will petition to be reclassified to Agency Managers.

The Council's anticipated savings of \$128K from pairing branches is not worth the disruption it would cause. The Department did its own calculations to determine the savings and found that there would be little or no savings, plus there would be a reduction in public service hours.

The discussion is over as far as Council is concerned, but it has caused some schisms within the Department that must be mended.

The Union has stood in front of libraries and handed out flyers which talked about bloated management. It is a painful situation right now.

Question: What is the Union's motivation? What do they get out of this?

Answer: The proposal was to take away managers and add back frontline staff.

The budget of \$28.5M is probably what MCPL will end up with, and a decent library system has been created with this budget. There are some things that are in place that will allow the Department to build back. There are some things that have been done that the Department has been wanting to do for awhile, like year round Sunday service. The Wednesday morning hours have been added back at Germantown and Quince Orchard. There will be extended hours Friday through Sunday; hours are standardized with all branches opening at 10 a.m. and closing at 8:00 p.m. The greatest loss is the staff and the collection; 80 positions will be lost. A number of staff have been fortunate enough to find positions within the County, many with HHS. Even with that, 25 to 30 people may end up being terminated. Some staff may be eligible for the retirement incentive program.

Director Hamilton thanked the Library Board for all they have done. The Department is in a good place because all the recommendations were made strategically in order to build back. Mr. Leggett says that this has been painful for him, and he looks forward to adding money back to the Library Department when the funds are available.

The **Annual Leave Awards** will be held on May 26. There are ten categories in which staff are nominated by other staff members. Certificates are given to all awardees. The awards tea is funded by Friends of the Library grant money. The Board has been invited to attend. Sixty-two staff members will be recognized.

A number of **retirement** parties are being held around the System. Staff members are furnishing the food for these parties. Director Hamilton plans to have a reunion for all staff in September. The Board will be invited.

A letter has been sent to the school system letting them know that MCPL will not have the regular **summer reading program** that they are accustomed to and explaining to them what is in place now.

OLD BUSINESS

Annual Meeting

Chair Brodsky explained to the Board why the Annual Meeting had been canceled without a full discussion by the entire Board. Director Hamilton had contacted him explaining that there was no funding for the meeting and staff time could not be committed to it. The decision to cancel would have been made too late if it had to wait until tonight's meeting. The speakers needed to be contacted as well

as the facility. Because of the dire situation, the decision to cancel the meeting was made. Chair Brodsky apologized if the process was not consultative.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:

LAC Achievement Awards Subcommittee

The five awards are:

LAC Membership Award – presented to the LAC which demonstrates effective membership recruitment and retention methods.

Renaissance Award – presented to the LAC which emerged after a period of difficulty or transition.

Member(s) of the Year Award – presented to the outstanding member(s) of an LAC for their work during the year.

Library Board Liaison Award – presented to the individual and their LAC who exemplify the idea liaison relationship.

Eleanor Ablard Award – presented to the LAC with the most effective program linking the LAC, the library and its users.

This year there were five submissions in three categories: the LAC Membership Award, the Member of the Year Award and the Eleanor Ablard Award.

Olney won the LAC Membership Award.

Carl Brandt of the Long Branch LAC is the winner of the Member of the Year Award. Aspen Hill was the runner up with Silver Spring coming in third.

Damascus is the winner of the Eleanor Ablard Award.

There was discussion regarding the purchase of awards for the LAC winners. It was suggested that due to lack of funding, certificates should be given this year. In the past, the LAC was also given an award along with the individual. It was suggested that Mr. Leggett could be asked to do proclamations or certificates that would be framed. It was decided that the cost for the awards would be determined, and the Board members would contribute to cover the cost. The awardees will be invited to the next Board meeting to receive their awards. The Board members will contribute to food for a small reception.

LAC BUSINESS:

LAC Applications

The application submitted for LAC membership was approved unanimously.

LAC Updates

The **Gaithersburg** LAC had some questions regarding the interim facility. Director Hamilton said that the County Attorney is still reviewing the lease, and there is money to fund the interim site. Linda

Gimourginas will not be the manager of the interim site because there will be short hours and a small staff. Linda's skills are best used at a larger branch. The interim site is scheduled to open on July 1.

The Gaithersburg LAC will continue to meet during the renovation. Their next meeting is scheduled for September. (Howard)

The **Olney LAC** is working with the collection in anticipation of the renovation. They are getting rid of their music CDS. The books that are being kept will be boxed and moved to a storage facility. (O. Lewis)

The branches that are being renovated had funds for the collection rolled into the renovation budget. Opening day collections will be purchased for these branches. (Hamilton)

Aspen Hill received a County Beautification Award for their garden. There was a ceremony on Saturday that the County Executive attended. (Bryant)

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

B. Parker Hamilton, Director